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ABSTRACT

This report describes an experimental project called the New York City Interaction Umbrella Project, which puts into action communities' creative response to educational problems. The 46 pilot programs operating between schools and their communities are grouped into four categories, each being controlled by an Umbrella Board. The particular focus of this report is on Umbrella Five, which deals with the lack of meaningful communication between educators and laymen. Umbrella Five contains eight of the 46 components of the Program: a school-community neighborhood center, handbooks and supplements, parents' resource center, student progress reporter corps, after school referral center, bilingual and cultural program, film-making, and operation reach-out. (Author/DM)

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New York City School Community Interaction

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HANDBOOK
Umbrella 5 – Communications

ESEA, Title III

514 West 126th Street, New York, N. Y.

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A C K N O W L E D G E M E N T

Umbrella Five wishes to acknowledge the contributions and cooperation of all staff members and component coordinators in the preparation of program descriptions for inclusion in this Handbook.

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INTRODUCTION

We of Umbrella Five recognize the need for meaningful communication. We feel that all communication channels must be open, informative, functional and viable. Where our goals, interests, and aims are concerned, pellucid communication is essential. It is an absolute necessity if we are to work effectively together. We have therefore prepared this Handbook as a service to parents and members of the Umbrella Five community. Our hope is that increased awareness and understanding of what can be done when communities decide to work together for the common good, will motivate all to work harder for the education of our youth.

Patrick E. White

Umbrella Five Administrator

CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION — 514 West 126 Street, New York, N.Y.C. — Mr. Patrick E. White, Umbrella Administrator

COMPO-NENT	PROGRAM	LOCATION	COORDINATOR	UMBRELLA BOARD MEMBERS
1	SCHOOL-COMMUNITY NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER	514 W. 126 St. New York, N.Y.	Mrs. D. Washington	Mrs. R. Hendrix
2	SCHOOL-COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING VIA HANDBOOK AND SUPPLEMENTS	70-48 Austin Street Forest Hills, N.Y.	Mr. M. Lewis	Mr. W. Buchan Mrs. S. Price
3	PARENTS RESOURCE CENTER	1668 Third Ave. New York, N.Y.	Mrs. M. Steinberg	Mrs. DiTrapani Mrs. S. Shepard
4	STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTER CORPS	146 St. Nic-holas Ave. New York, N.Y.	Mr. J. Malcioln	Mr. J. Murray Mr. Aytch
5	AFTER-SCHOOL REFERRAL CENTER	514 W. 126 St. New York, N.Y.	Mrs. B. Edwards	Mr. B. Washing-ton
6	BI-LINGUAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAM	Ocean Hill-Brownsville 249 Hopkinson Ave. Brooklyn, N.Y.	Mr. H. Parker	Mr. W. Lynch Mr. L. Fuentes
7	FILM-MAKING	514 W. 126 St. New York, N.Y.	William Hudson (Consultant)	
8	OPERATION REACH-OUT	2812 Mermaid Ave. Brooklyn, N.Y.	Mrs. G. McMahon	Mrs. D. Hart Mr. Sussman

PATRICK E. WHITE

Umbrella Five Administrator

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Umbrella Five Chairlady

NEED FOR CHANGE

In the wilderness of the vast changes in our environment, the education of our young is an intricate, perplexing, and above all, continually changing process.

If we assume that the reason for sending our children to school every day is to give them the thought processes necessary to best cope with this environment of bewildering change, then we might conclude that our attempts at educating our young are failing. The educational process we are presently employing is archaic--in spite of its usefulness a decade ago. Today's educational process is out of tune with the times. It has not grown and changed as fast as the times have changed. But the fact is, it can't respond to the changes wrought by time through the huge and cumbersome bureaucratic system necessary to deal with the enormous and growing student population. First, problems with old processes must be discovered. Then, new processes must be formulated. By the time these new processes pass through the hierarchy of the educational system, and all the stamps of approval are gathered, we find that the new processes are old. While they should have been put into action, they instead were wandering through the channels of a bureaucracy. Quite often, the new ideas never get through the system.

This makes a clear need for educational control on a lower level--the community level. Because of this cumber-

some and lethargic system, it is necessary for the communities to handle more and more of education's problems.

The man on the street is no longer as naive and uninformed as he once was. Mass media has remedied that, especially in a city such as New York. Community people now see that education is one of our most important resources to be used in perpetuating the human species. They also see that it is riddled with problems and inadequacies. They see that the problems have already become too numerous, too vast and far-reaching to be handled by the minds of a few; these problems require the minds of <u>many</u> to discover their solutions --our laymen as well as our professional educators; they need the contributions of each of us, no matter how small.

There is still another reason for including the community in the solutions of education's problems. Each community has different needs, each has special problems other communities do not have. The people of the community see this quite clearly. They see their unmet needs everyday; and they have to live with the consequences. They realize each community needs different programs.

With the new awareness of their predictament, community parents are angry. They see their children attending inadequate school programs which do not meet the community's needs. They see their children graduate from high school totally unprepared to meet the demands of today's job market. Parents with children in school today want action today, and many of them have the creative ideas to be put into action.

The people are no longer ready to accept complete control from outside the community. Complete outside control has given them schools with which they are not satisfied and have had little opportunity to change.

But to try to make remote administrators aware of these needs and try to get them to accept some of the community's creative responses to these needs is quite often a vain effort. Administrators often feel their "qualified" personnel know what is best, and no one else need say anything. But surely this can't be the case. The question arises, who knows that is best for the community's problems, those people who live within the community, or those people whose 9 to 5 job it is to deal with the community? The answer, of course, is both. Both have valid and workable solutions to problems. Each sees problems the other does not; each has solutions the other is unable to see. Only, the professional educator has the power of decision, whereas the layman does not. When a huge, remote, unresponsive, and impersonal bureaucracy stands between an idea and its implementation, laymen shrink back. Their idea remains an idea and nothing more. They are faced with what they see as an invincible system, a system which will not make an adequate response to their voice.

Part of this problem lies in the lack of meaningful communication between educators and laymen. Often, lines of communication between the two are non-existent. This is less true today than ever before, but even where lines of communication are established, there is still a roadblock. Education

specialists and laymen live in two different cultures, especially in ghetto areas. They speak different languages; they have difficulty understanding what the other is saying. In the past, when these two parties have met in common concern about a problem they were unable to have a meaningful relationship, unable to communicate effectively. This lack of meaningful communication must be eliminated for it is a major cause of misunderstanding among parents, community workers, teachers and administrators. This misunderstanding, in turn, results in little or no progress towards solving problems. It slows down progress in developing a better educational system. If this problem could be eliminated, progress could be made; we could begin giving our children the kind of education they need.

RESPONSE TO THE NEED

It is well known that New York City, as of July 1,1970, has started to implement the idea of decentralization by giving communities certain degrees of control over their schools. What is not quite so well known is that as a forerunner to this implementation process, a three year experimental pilot project was instituted to serve the following purposes:

A. Decentralization-to demonstrate a process that would meet three important objectives of decentralization.

   1. The governing and policy-making body of the project selected from those directly involved in the project.

2. Organization and administration of project based on need and purpose of project as delineated by community or communities directly involved.
3. Authority for implementation of program and administration placed directly with group or groups directly involved.

B. School-Community Interaction-to demonstrate a process that will meet two important objectives of school-community interaction.
1. Programs proposed, planned, designed and implemented by school-community groups acting in partnership on expressed needs.
2. Governing board of project composed of equal amount of school personnel and community persons with equal amount of voting responsibility. This unique factor places the two groups on the same side of the table.

The experimental project, called the New York City Interaction Umbrella Project, is putting into action communities creative responses to educational problems. The projects were given seed money through Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The money is controlled by the New York City Board of Education and the State Education Department. The project consists of 46 pilot programs which operate between schools and their communities. The 46 programs are grouped into four categories, each category being controlled by an Umbrella Board.

Umbrella Two deals with Curriculum, Umbrella Three with Guidance-Pupil Personnel Services, Umbrella Four with Basic Skills-English As a Second Language, and Umbrella Five with Communication.

UMBRELLA #5 PROGRAM OPERATION BOARD

Umbrella Five deals with the lack of meaningful communication between educators and laymen. Its entire focus is bridging the gap between these two cultures. It is Umbrella Five which opens the road, makes possible, the solving of New York City's educational problems. It establishes an effective communications network.

Umbrella Five involves eight components--eight of the 46 individual programs in the Interaction Umbrella Project. The policy-making and governing body of the Umbrella is called the Program Operation Board. A quorum, for voting purposes, has been established as more than one half of the funded components. A component's vote can be cast by either the school representative or the community representative.

The Program Operation Board is the final repository of power within the Umbrella. Besides making policy for the Umbrella, it has the concomitant job of acting as "Supreme Court" for organizational problems. It is an organ of review, appraisal and appeal; in crisis situations, it is an organ of action. Perhaps the major function of this body is to develop the kind of atmosphere in which the philosophy of management is able to develop and grow.

Early in the implementation stage of this project, some members of the Program Operation Board and some of the project

personnel sat together in a few "brainstorming" meetings in an attempt to analyze the meaning of the word "Communication." This group was dissatisfied with the definition of the word as defined by the Webster New Universal Dictionary. That dictionary indicated the following as the main meaning of the word:

1. The act of imparting, conferring, or delivering from one to another; as, the communication of knowledge, opinion or facts.
2. Intercourse by words, letters, or messages; interchange of thoughts or opinions, by conference or other means.

It was felt that even though the above definitions were good for those who dealt with the word or the idea of communication in the casual or ordinary sense, that these definitions were not enough for the members of this Umbrella who must deal with the concept of communications in a specialized sense.

The group did its homework well, for not only were they able to unlock the true secrets behind the word, but they were also able to forge a communication network within the Umbrella that has enabled the Umbrella to function internally like a well oiled machine. The group asked and sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are communications?
2. Does the dictionary definition relate to what we want to do as an Umbrella? Or, shall we perceive our job as being much more profound and of wider scope?

3. What factors make up good communications?
4. What factors, if left out, cause warped communications?

The group segmented communications into five component parts:

1. Sender - every communication must have a sender. This person is the initiator of the message. The message may have been stimulated by a prior message and therefore may be feedback from a prior communication as well as being the beginning of the communication.
2. Receiver - there must be a receiver. This would be the person or group at whom the message is aimed.
3. Medium - there must be a medium by which the message travels. The medium could be the telephone, the mail, direct word of mouth, etc.
4. Message - there must be a message. Preferably, the message should be clear, concise, and to the point.
5. Feedback - there must be feedback. Without this important ingredient, there is no way of knowing if the message has been received, or if received, that the message was understood.

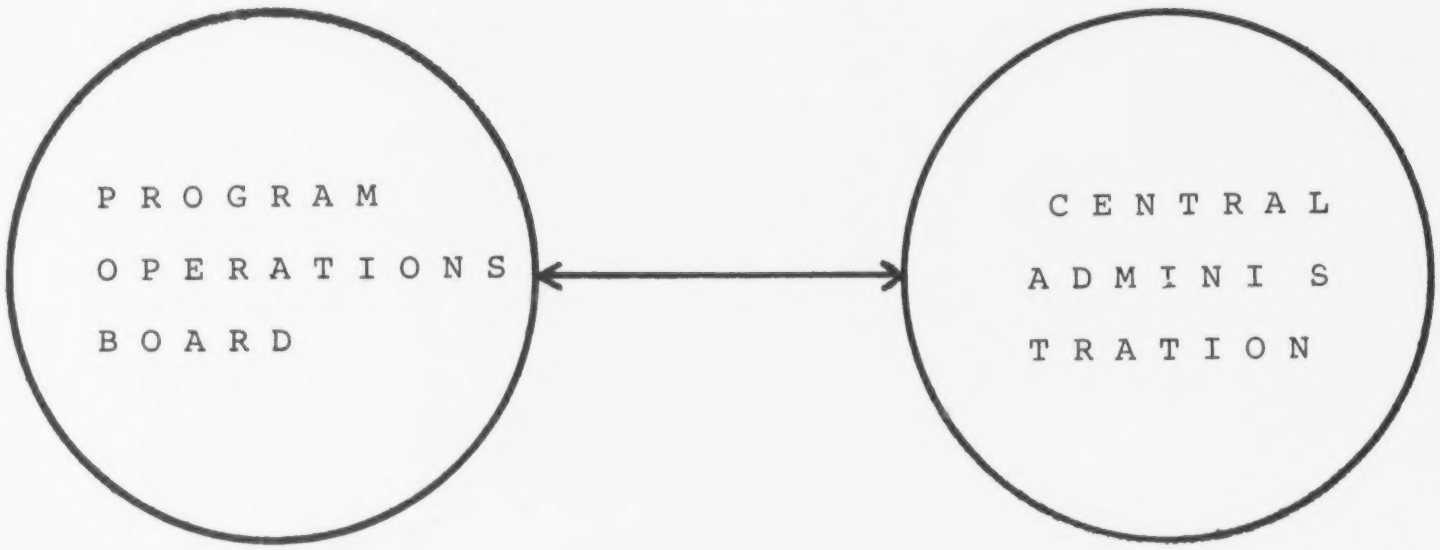
Umbrella 5 is convinced that good communications requires that each of the above component parts be properly addressed.

Stemming from this new cognition of communications, came a new perception of the role of the various component parts of the Umbrella, and how they should relate to each other. During the planning stage of this project, the chart of organization

would have to be delineated as triangular, with the information and authority flowing downward. This poor information flow caused a great amount of internal problems, suspicions, and vituperations. It became quite obvious that warped communications were being received and feedback was either non-existent or very poor. The indication during that early period was that authority as well as communications flowed downward. The new perception sees the various component parts of the Umbrella as centers of authority and communications, with free flowing communications among the various component parts.

The Program Operation Board sees one of its important functions as that of a major communication center that sends to, and receives from the various communities of the Umbrella, information concerning the communities, their needs and aspirations, and communications concerning the Umbrella. This free back and forth flow of information has to a large extent allayed the suspicions that pervaded the earlier period. More important, however, it has brought on a working partnership between the communities and the Umbrella that was thought impossible during the planning period.

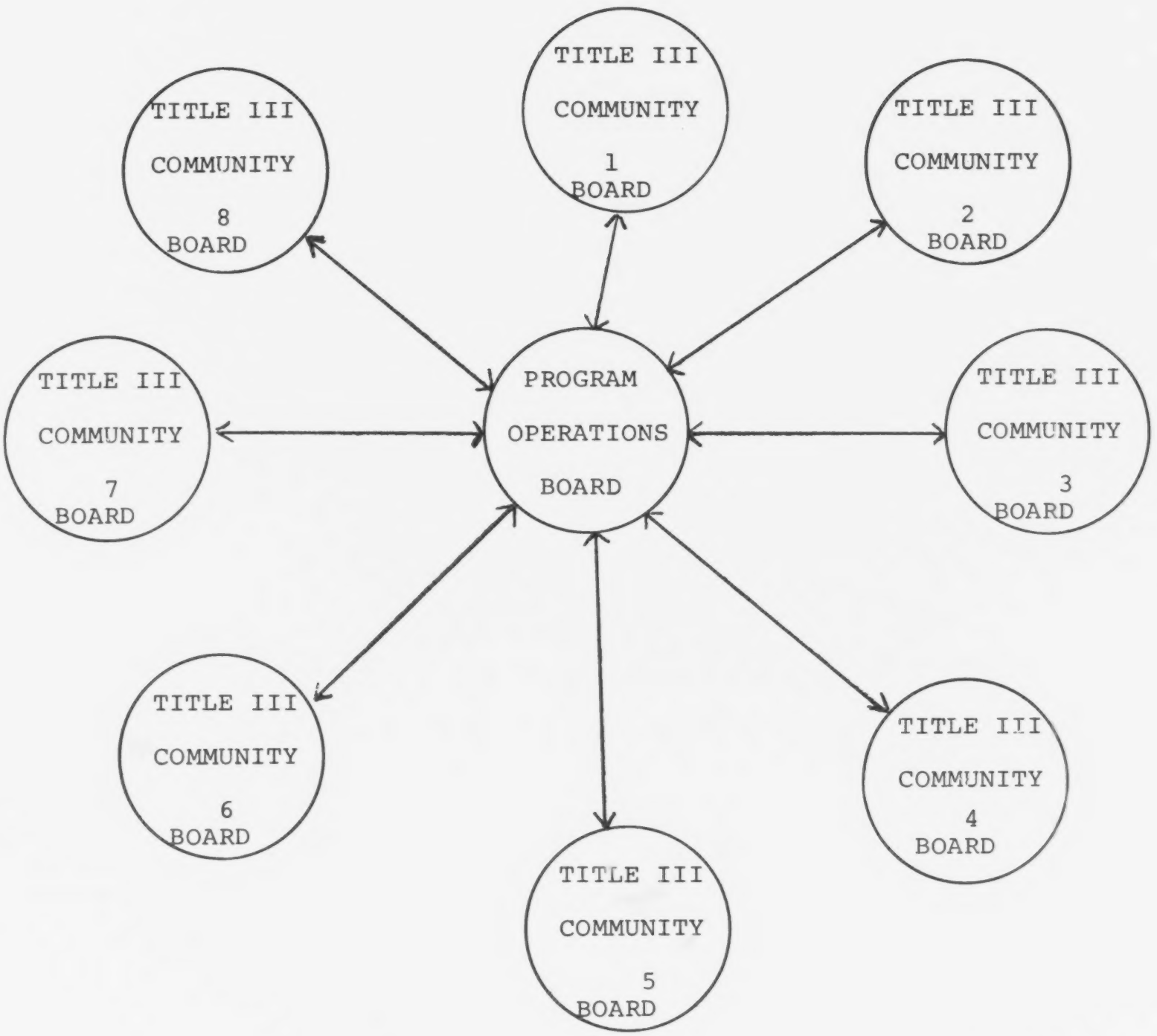
Diagrams 1 - 4 indicate the communications relationship among the various segments of the Umbrella. The two arrowhead lines (⟷) indicate the two-way flow of communications among the segments. These arrowhead lines indicate more than information flow, because along these same lines, flow the sharing of authority and responsibility for the successful outcome of the project. The flattening of the



COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIP

PROGRAM OPERATIONS BOARD - CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

DIAGRAM #1


TITLE III COMMUNITY 1 BOARD
TITLE III COMMUNITY 2 BOARD
TITLE III COMMUNITY 3 BOARD
TITLE III COMMUNITY 4 BOARD
TITLE III COMMUNITY 5 BOARD
TITLE III COMMUNITY 6 BOARD
TITLE III COMMUNITY 7 BOARD
TITLE III COMMUNITY 8 BOARD
PROGRAM OPERATIONS BOARD

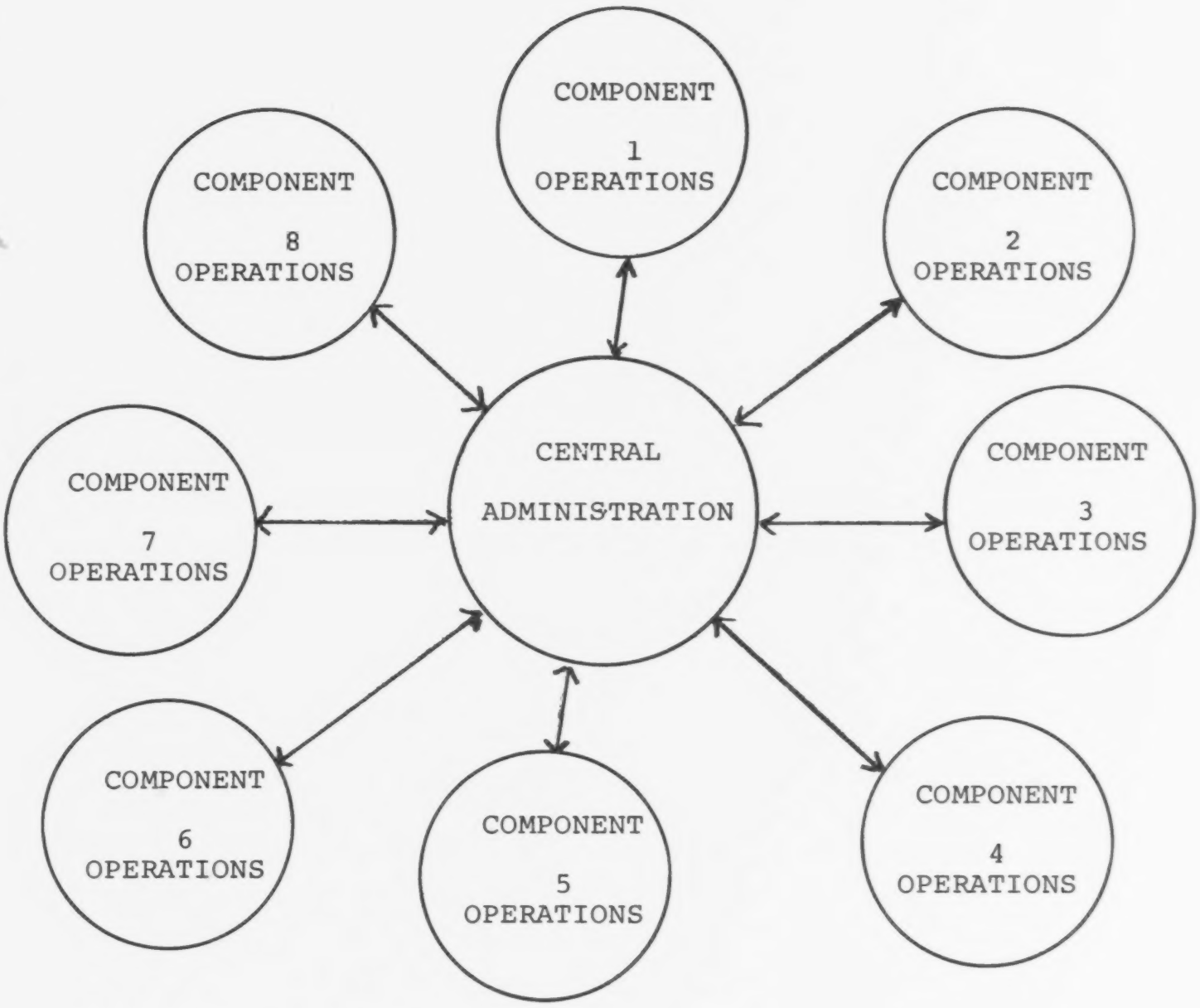
THE PROGRAM OPERATIONS BOARD

AND ITS

COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY

BOARDS

DIAGRAM #2

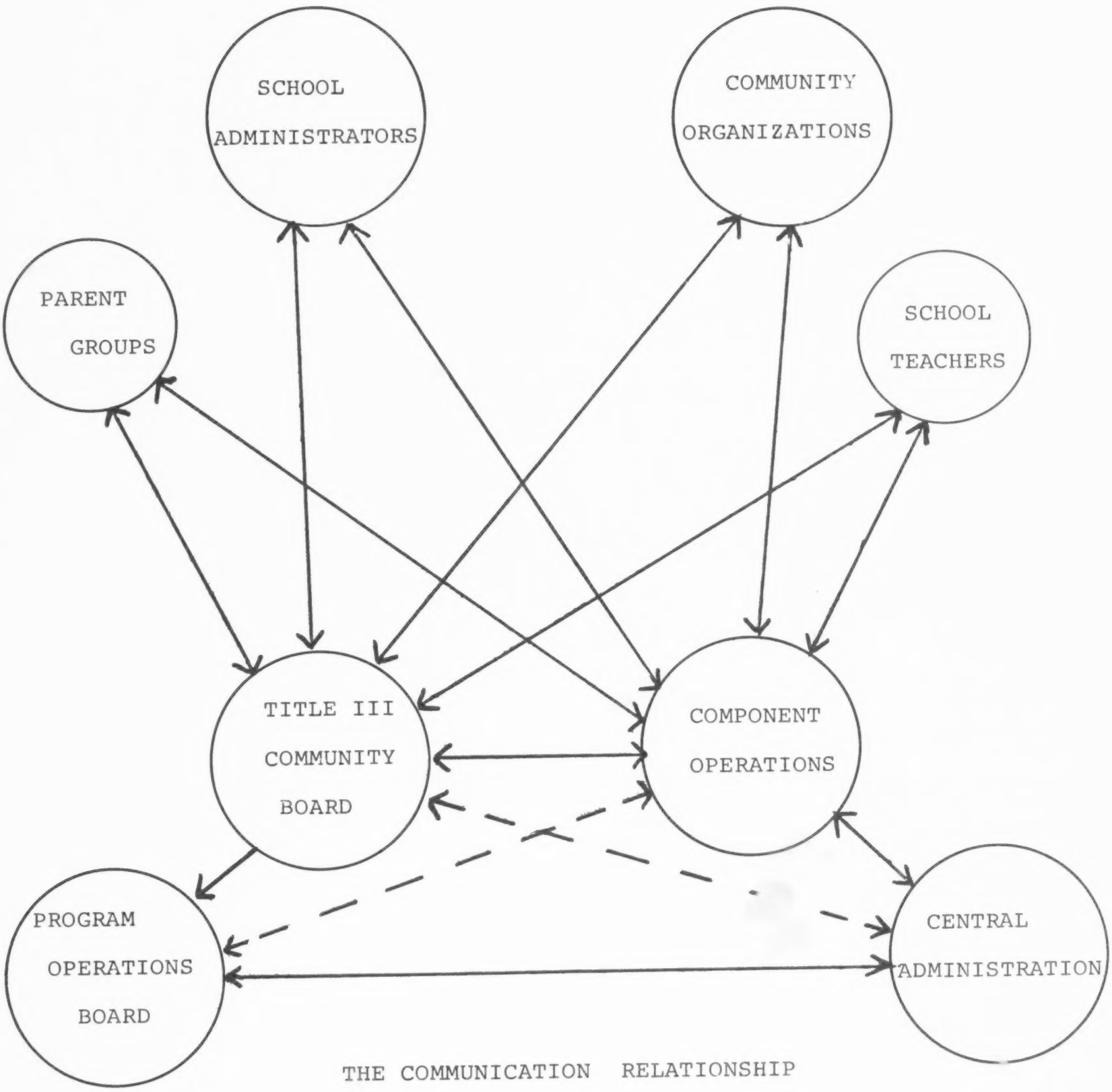


CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION

AND ITS

COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMPONENTS

DIAGRAM #3



THE COMMUNICATION RELATIONSHIP

FROM THE STANDPOINT OF A COMPONENT IN ITS

INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

DIAGRAM #4

triangular authorization chart of organization into a series of basically wheel-shaped relationship with both authority and information flowing freely among the segnments, is considered by the Program Operation Board as one of its chief accomplishments in the internal management of the Umbrella.

The most important factor about this accomplishment is that it works; it works despite the disruptive distractions of the educational establishment and in spite of the so-called radical groups in the community. It works because it admits into the information-authority flow, the ideas of all segments from the school and community. The smooth blending of these divergent ideas into courses of action has become a regular portion of the Umbrella process.

OBJECTIVES OF UMBRELLA BOARD FIVE

Each component of the Umbrella has its own objectives, but each is aimed at achieving the overall objective of Umbrella Five. This objective is to better the school-community relationship by heightening school-community communications. It seeks to lessen the gap between educators and laymen by providing two-way communication between parents and school, school and parents. The Umbrella's functions lessen the tendency for the professional to feel that he is the only one with the answers; they enable the parent to see school as part of the community, a part in which he has rights as well as obligations.

OBJECTIVES, PROCEDURES AND PROGRESS OF THE EIGHT COMPONENTS

COMPONENT ONE: SCHOOL-COMMUNITY NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Located on 126th Street in Harlem, Component One operates as a School-Community and Neighborhood Center for School District 6. It began when the Harlem Parents Committee, out of its deep concern for the lack of meaningful communication between the local schools and the community, petitioned the office of Projects to Advance Creativity in Education to fund its proposal. In effect, they asked an unresponsive system for aid in bringing about changes within that system.

Component One seeks to institutionalize change by equipping the powerless parents of the Harlem ghetto with a detailed knowledge of the governmental system of New York City, and even more so, New York's educational system. Parents are now being offered the information and insight necessary to analyze and evaluate proposed educational changes, while at the same time conducting on-going research in the educational problems of the school and community. The parents are also trained to bring about change in the educational system through various methods of petitioning the government and educational structures. The program works further to organize more meaningful communications between school and community in order to establish a learning partnership between teachers and parents. These functions are directed at one major goal: achieving the human rights of a meaningful education for children.

Component One carries out its goals in many ways. It produces and distributes newsletters. It conducts informal

talks with teachers in the schools. It holds meetings where men experienced in government, education, law, and community dynamics, talk with parents and community workers. Films are shown on relevant subjects such as drug addiction. The staff works with parents of retarded and physically handicapped children. They instruct parents in the meaning of decentralization and encourage them to vote.

Component One has managed to educate and motivate a great many parents, involving them in their children's school. More and more parents are attending meetings and taking advantage of the Component's services, learning about the system through which they have to solve their problem. With a staff of seven part-time people, the Component reaches approximately 500 parents.

COMPONENT TWO: SCHOOL-COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING VIA HANDBOOK AND SUPPLEMENTS

Located in Forest Hills, Queens, Component Two was created when the Local School Board of District 28 joined forces with similar groups. They recognized a particularly strong need for a communications program because of their unique situation: their district encompases 30 schools and 28,000 students, spread out over a vast geographic area. It is populated with families of all economic levels, with a representation of some 40 ethnic groups -- a good example of New York's melting pot. In a community such as this, education's need of a sense of cohesiveness and common purpose is particularly acute

Component Two has worked to fulfill this need in many ways. The first was in the District 28 Handbook, distributed to parents and students, community workers and school personnel. The Handbook offers notes of historical origin on the different Queens neighborhoods. This gives the community residents a sense of common ground. A neighborhood which is both economically and ethnically diverse can begin to feel itself a unit. The Handbook also includes factual information on the schools themselves. Photographs of the children participating in the school's programs, bring home the idea that something is being given the student every day, other than a straightlaced, academic classroom. Part of a child's education is activities which allow him to be creative and human. Photographs show the parents that it is real and makes them feel more familiar with their children's schools. In the back of the Handbook are listed community centers and community services, making the Handbook something for parents to keep for future reference. Many families who could use community services if they only know about them, are reached in this way.

Component Two also produces newsletters periodically, explaining different programs and activities currently in progress at the different schools. The Component keeps everyone up-to-date on what is going on in the schools and explains programs which are in the planning stages. This gives an interested parent the opportunity to share experiences which helps to encourage an understanding of the common goals, needs and problems of the various neighborhoods.

COMPONENT TWO CONTINUED

Another of the ways District 28 is being given a sense of cohesiveness and common purpose, is through District meetings. These meetings are attended by the District Superintendent, the Local School Board, the different Parent Associations, and other community parents who wish to attend. It is at these meetings that ideas and information are exchanged on a person-to-person basis and the more fruitful bonds of communication are established.

Component Two also initiates special programs on crucial issues. Recently, they brought student representatives from all the District's schools together to be informed on the drug problem at a special two-day drug forum. The student representatives went back to their schools to begin peer group pressure against the use of drugs.

Component Two has succeeded in developing a greater sense of community involvement in education. Realizing the necessity for getting involved in the programs and methods being used to educate the children in this area, the District has been brought together perhaps for the first time. A measure of the program's success can be seen through the greater number of people now working with the Component. A measure of its success can also be seen in its wide recognition and written commendation. It has received letters of commendation from many local officials, Mayor Lindsay, and several Congressmen.

With a staff of 16 paid and voluntary part-time employees, the Component reaches approximately 5,000 elementary students, 6,000 secondary students, 14,000 adults, and 500 teachers.

COMPONENT THREE: PARENTS RESOURCE CENTER

In the East Harlem-Yorkville area, Component Three operates as a Parents Resource Center for information on the schools and communities of School District 2. It became obvious in this district, as it had in others, that parents are too little aware of the available resources that can help them with family, educational and other problems. The schools are anxious to help, but they don't have the time, the information, or the staff to provide the counsel to those parents who week their help. Most important perhaps, the schools are not equipped to reach out to those who do not actively seek assistance.

It was this situation which prompted the creation of Component Three. From its office on Third Avenue, the Component operates as a self-help service center, where Parent Associations come to print fliers, notices, newsletters and bulletins, and hold meetings and workshops. This office provides any parent or school group with a place to work, the necessary machinery, and any help they may need for achieving their objectives. Without Component Three, many Parent Associations from District 2 would be without these services. Component Three's staff help the parents write their newsletters and fliers, they hold workshops on how to write newsletters, they help the parents prepare their by-laws, organize their leadership, and mount membership drives. The staff produce and distribute their own newsletters also, reaching out to inform parents of the educational activities

they need to become involved in. They are given the time and place of all special events taking place in the schools, such as speakers, films, workshops and discussions. The Center at Component Three also provides access to information on most of the district's schools, the programs operating in the schools, and information on the communities the schools serve.

The effect of Component Three's functions has become evident through increased parental involvement in the schools, increased interaction between the parents and the schools, and an increased inter-cultural understanding--all providing a healthier environment in which the schools and the community can work together.

With a staff of three full-time and other voluntary help, the Component reaches approximately 11,258 elementary students, 4,141 secondary students, 22,000 adults, and 600 teachers.

COMPONENT FOUR: STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTER CORPS

Located on St. Nicholas Avenue in Harlem, Component Four is known as the Student Progress Reporter Corps. It operates as an after-school center for students having difficulty in school. Its first objective is to improve the communication skills of the students they recruit into their program. They are given individualized instruction which is always related to activities associated with newspaper work, such as news-gathering, reporting, interviewing and editing. The students produce a newspaper called the Morningside Village Press. Getting them to write news articles and columns while putting the newspaper together, offers an excellent approach to tea-

ching the basic language skills

The second objective of the Component is to enhance the self-image of the students. When they are first recruited, many of the students do not have very positive feelings of their own worth. This is a handicap for them in acquiring communication skills, and also in developing community leadership potential. It was found that many of the students had very strong doubts concerning their ability to produce a newspaper -- even under the supervision of adults and teachers. Their attitudes toward work and job competition also revealed low self-concepts. This discovery by Component Four staff made it necessary to focus much attention upon these specific needs of the students. The students' self-concepts were greatly improved through much of their work at the center. For example, when the students were working on interviewing techniques, the staff arranged for the student reporter's initial interview to be held with sympathetic and cooperative adults, insuring a successful learning experience for each student.

After improving the students' communication skills and enhancing their self-images, Component Four tries to make the students willing to bring their abilities to bear upon the problems of the community, rather than using them to escape the community and its problems. They do this by developing in their students a strong sense of community pride. In the course of news gathering, interviewing, and distributing the newspaper the students find themselves actively en-

gaged in community affairs. Their columns in the paper reflect an intense awareness of their environment, and a need to work on improving that environment.

Another objective of Component Four is to establish a continuing dialogue between parents and school personnel. Such a dialogue produces fresh insight and understanding, leading to improvements in the quality of school and after-school programs. The direct and indirect participation of parents in this program gives them a knowledge about the life of the school by educating them in the school's work and problems. The contact with principals and teachers educates the school personnel in the life of the community. The school personnel are provided with insights and understanding which enables them to make their service to the community's children more effective.

The progress of this Component can be seen first in the constructive dialogues established between parents and school personnel. Each learned a great deal about the other. It is also considered an achievement that 37 to 40 students were recruited into the program in the first year. The most significant progress, however, has been made in determing the special needs of the youth involved. By means of specially designed tasks, and by means of tests disguised as games, a severe lack of basic skills of literacy was discovered. The importance of focusing on the specific needs of the students cannot be overestimated. In this community there is a real sign of hope in the emerging awareness of the needs of the

youth on the part of both parents and school personnel.

With a staff of four, the Component reaches approximately 30 elementary students, 60 secondary students, and 2 out-of school youths.

COMPONENT FIVE: AFTER-SCHOOL REFERRAL CENTER

Component Five, an after-school referral center, is also located on 126 Street in Harlem. In common with some of the other components, it has developed a working relationship between parents, school personnel and public health and welfare agencies. It serves as a center for information on schools and educational opportunities in the community. It has developed a small cadre of parents who are educated on the meaning of the decentralization bill and its effects on the schools. These parents work to inform other parents on this issue. The Component also reviews those agencies with which it comes into contact. This review determines if either Component Five's procedures or the procedures of the community agency are sufficient to meet the needs of the client. The Component works individually with many parents with specific problems. The staff has now developed a manual of information for use by school guidance and health personnel as to the resources of the community which surrounds the school. Component Five uses an analysis of the decentralization legislation, created by the United Bronx Parents, to explain to parents what the legislation means to the community and its schools, as well as what specific powers and authority are

given to the local community boards.

When the legislation was first enacted, lawyers were brought in to explain it to parents. Now Component Five makes available to parents copies of the original legislation and the Board of Education's final plan. Component Five also holds monthly meetings at which parents, school personnel and public agency personnel can discuss, familiarize themselves with, and attempt to resolve community-school issues. They engage speakers with special knowledge to talk to the parents about such things as their rights in the schools, and how to go about securing those rights. The staff at Component Five engage in speaking tours when requested by local schools and community agencies. The speaking tours acquaint community residents with what the Component is trying to do as well as allow the staff to listen to and observe what the current community thinking and feelings are about school-community problems.

The success of Component Five is like that of other components. It has established communication links within its community which are making the educational system more responsive to the community it serves. The successful activities of this program have encouraged many other parents to seek assistance with their own individual problems and begin working for better education in their community.

With a paid staff of three and 17 volunteers, the Component reaches approximately 15,000 elementary students, 10,000 secondary students and 35,000 adults.

COMPONENT SIX: BI-LINGUAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAM

This Component, in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district, has established a bi-lingual program which represents the beginning of paying heed to today's cries for relevance in education. In this district, there was a great problem with students dropping out of school. They had been dropping out simply because they could not understand what was being said in their classrooms: 20% of the school's enrollment is Spanish-speaking, 7 - 8% of whom are non-English speaking. In a community with a large Spanish-speaking population, there was no Spanish-speaking teachers, making today's cries for relevance in education a sad understatement indeed.

The bi-lingual program operates in the 4th through 7th grades. Teachers with predominantly Spanish-speaking students are assisted by one of the eight English-Spanish speaking people working for this program. These eight people live in the Ocean Hill-Brownsville district, and are considered para-professionals, since each has at least two years of college. It is, perhaps, the largest collection of educated Spanish-speaking people working in the education field in New York -- in spite of New York's large Spanish-speaking population. These para-professionals teach remedial reading and mathematics, helping the Spanish-speaking students translate and understand the material. Working in the classroom with the regular teacher, the para-professionals frequently take the students aside to help them individually, interpreting the lessons taught by the teacher, and translating their homework assignments.

Component Six is quite innovative in recognizing the interaction between cultural relevance in education and pupil motivation and achievement. It is even more innovative in its offering remedial assistance to a group of students not previously approached on this basis. Culturally enriched curricula are usually reserved for average or above average students on the theory that they would profit most. Component Six believes that such a program can offer real benefits to all students.

The ultimate achievement of the Component is its provision of a meaningful and relevant curriculum for 4th through 7th grade Spanish children who may have been dropouts. It has removed 9 - 13 year old children from the absurd situation of being told to sit inside a building for six hours a day, five days a week and listen to someone talk in a language they either could not understand, or understood, only with great difficulty.

With a staff of ten, the Component reaches approximately 128 elementary students, 64 secondary students and 222 parents.

COMPONENT SEVEN: FILM-MAKING

On 125 Street in Harlem, Component Seven operates as a film and sound studio. The objective of this Component is to tell a previously untold story of the ghetto.

The story portrays the unheralded activities and endeavors reflecting the more positive aspects of ghetto life and the concerted efforts being made to change the ghetto into a more positive community. The films being produced by this Component document the dignity and humanity which also re-

COMPONENT SEVEN CONTINUED

sides in the ghetto, but have never been publicized. The focus is education, but the schools represent only a part of the story. The true story is about what Harlem residents, particularly the youth, are doing with themselves. It includes the teenage block associations, African culture programs, remedial education centers, recreation centers, charm schools, art schools, and other culturally and educationally supportive activities in stores, lofts, schools, churches and banks. The films highlight acts of accomplishment, achievement and wholesome endeavors of ghetto residents meriting commendation and applause. These films are designed to balance the well established indices of deprivation, illness, poverty and powerlessness prevalent throughout the Harlem community.

Component Seven will release two films: "Harlem, The Other Culture" providing a historical reference of day-to-day activities of Harlem residents, coverage of historical landmarks and institutions. The second film, "Projects To Advance Creativity in Education" will act as a teaching tool. It deals with the functions of the other seven components, conveying to the public the work being carried out by concerned communities.

Through the media of film, this Component's staff of twelve will reach an audience of millions with a very important story. Most important, perhaps, this Component is creating a better understanding of the problems of education in an urban community.

COMPONENT EIGHT: OPERATION REACH-OUT

Located on Mermaid Avenue in Coney Island,Component Eight calls its program "Operation Reach-Out." Like the other components, they are attempting to devise in their own community a solution to the problem of faulty communications between school and parent. They are most interested in helping the parent help his child. A great deal of their work is done from referrals by teachers and school guidance personnel. They bring the school officials and parents together to resolve conflicts concerning suspension, truants, children with behavior problems, and teacher attitudes. Many times when they go to the home of a parent in the area, they find a family which could use help with many other problems; they assist these families in finding the right agencies for their particular needs.

The Component's staff has managed to get alienated parents and indifferent teachers to attend meetings concerning their children and students. The meetings are held either in the school or in the Component's storefront office. This feat is considered a great accomplishment and an important breakthrough in the communications gap, because many parents and teachers fear and distrust one another. Through the work of this Component, many of the so-called "hardcore" individuals, parents and teachers, have softened to the extent of meeting together at least halfway. The Component has made them more aware and interested in the problems of their chil-

dren. The meetings have assured them there are school personnel who do care about the children. Parents are now joining Parent Associations to voice their opinions, and the Parent Association themselves have become more active.

Like the other components, Component Eight serves as an information center on schools and school programs. It holds meetings with relevant speakers, hosts many workshops, and periodically produces a newsletter. It's greatest work, however, is seen in the direct link between parent and school. This link will lead to understanding between two very different kinds of people. It will motivate children to do better in school by motivating parents to make better schools for their children. With a staff of six, the Component reaches approximately 600 elementary students, 200 secondary students, 150 post-secondary students, 35 out-of-school youth, 900 adults and 400 teachers.

CONCLUSION

The people working for Umbrella Five's communications program have dedicated themselves to the tough and frustrating task of changing a system that has been made unsatisfactory and potentially damaging by the ravages of time and a blinding rate of change in the human condition. They are channeling their creative energies of attack into constructive programs which operate within that very inflexible system which they desire to change. They have a very strong desire to "bring the system together with the people" for whom the system exists. They have mounted a quiet, constructive and creative revolution which is working with the system to help it change itself, instead of against it to make it change itself.

Collectively, these people represent a long-needed grass-roots demand for a chance to remove the roadblock of ineffective, it not non-existent, communications between an educational system and the people it is supposed to serve. So far, they have made excellent progress towards their goals, re-establishing the line of personal contact between the establishment and the child and his family.